

Spring2008

ETHN 101: ETHNIC IMAGES IN FILM

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Office Hours: M 3:30-4:30: W 3-4

Representation is possible only because enunciation is always produced within codes which have a history, a position within the discursive formations of a particular space and time.

... There is no escape from the politics of representation, and we cannot wield 'how li/b really is out there' as a kind of test against which the political rightness or wrongness of a particular cultural strategy or text can be measured...We are always in negotiation, not with a single set of oppositions that place us always in the same relation to others, but with a series of different positionalities...

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course will focus on cinematic representations of race, ethnicity, and nationality to interpret the stories they tell-about identity, relations of power, and experiences at the site of various social locations, or "positionalities". These examinations will be informed by understandings of social power relations emanating from colonial legacies and contemporary racial formation in national and global contexts, paying careful attention to overlapping dimensions of social structure such as gender, sexuality, and classes these co-construct each other (e.g., race-ing gender, gendering race). As we make these examinations, we will seek to develop an "oppositional gaze" to critically "negotiate" and try to "decode" these texts, drawing from standpoints grounded in diverse "positionalities." This is an important step towards contesting the hegemony of "ethnic notions" and visioning/creating social justice.

COURSE READINGS (required)

A reading packet through University Readers

Denzin, Norman. 2002. Reading Race: Hollywood and the Cinema of Racial Violence'; Sage Publications.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation 20%

Exercises/Assignments 20%

Take Home Midterm (due 5/5 in class) 30%

Final Exam (due date of class final) 30%

Attendance/C

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS & READINGS

INTRODUCTION

3/31/08

The Ethnic Studies Project and issues of representation

VIEW: segment Color of Fear

READ:

Lopez, Ian Haney. "The Social Construction of Race."

Ducille, Ann, "The Color of Class: Classifying Race in the Popular Imagination," *Social Identities* 7 (3)2001: 409-419.

Bell, Lee Ann, "Telling Tales: What Stories Can Teach Us About Racism," *Race, Ethnicity and Education* 6 (1) 2003: 3-28.

II. ETHNIC NOTIONS/SUBJECTS OF COLONIAL EMPIRE

4/7/08

Reading Representations-Hollywood History

VIEW: Ethnic Notions

READ:

Denzin, Introduction and Chap 1 (Part One)

Kilty, Keith M. and Eric Swank, "Institutional Racism and Media Representations: Depictions of Violent Criminals and Welfare Recipients," *Sociological Imagination* 34 (2-3), 1997:105-128'

4/14/08

White Heroes against THE OTHER: The Empire's Myths & Reification

VIEW: TBA

READ:

Davies, Jude, "'Diversity. America. Leadership. Good over evil.'

Hollywood multiculturalism and American imperialism in *Independence Day* and *Three Kings*," *Patterson/ Prejudice* 349

(4)2005: 397-415.

Eisele, John C., "The Wild East: Deconstructing the Language of Genre in the Hollywood Eastern,"
Cinema, Journal 41 (4) 2002:68-94.

III. RACISM RE-ARTICULATED-Reely Real

4/21/08

Cinematic Realism-"The White Hood"

VIEW: TBA

READ: Denzin, Part Two, Chaps2,3, and 4.

4/28/08

Cinematic Realism-The Black and Brown Hood

VIEW: TBA

READ: Denzin, Part Three, Chaps 5,6, & 7

IV. HYBRID NOTIONS

5/5/08

VIEW: scenes from Mississippi Masala; Bend it like Beckham

READ:

Seshagiri, Urmila, "At the Crossroads of Two Empires...", IAAS (June) 2003:177-98.

Giardina, Michael, "Bending It Like Beckham" in the Global Popular," Journal of 'Sport and Social Issues,
Vol.27 (I) 2003:65-82.

V. CHOOSING THE MARGIN?

5/12/08

VIEW: Smoke Signals

READ:

hooks, bell, "Choosing the Margin as a Space of Radical Openness," in Yearning; Race, Gender, and
Cultural Politics. Boston, MA: South End 1990.

Churchill, Ward, "The Open Veinsof Native North America" preface; in Fanta.views of the Master Race,
1992

Churchill, Ward, "Fantasies of the Master Race: Categories of Stereotyping of American Indians in Film,"
Ibid.

Churchill, Ward. "Lawrence of South Dakota: Dances with Wolves and the Maintenance of the American
Empire, Ibid.

5/19/08

VIEW: Real Women Have Curves

READ:

hooks, bell, "The Oppositional Gaze" Chapter I in Black Looks: Race and Representation. Boston, MA:
South End, 1992

5/26/08

MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY-NO CLASS

6/2/08

VIEW: Bamboozled

READ:

Chidester. Phil et al, "Black is Black. ..." The Howard, Journal of Communications 17, 2006: 287-306.

Denzin, Part Four, Chapter 8.